

## William S. Lawton

Bill Lawton has served as a Senior Trade Specialist at the Ft. Lauderdale U.S. Export Assistance Center since, April 2004. He previously was posted as PCO in Vladivostok Russia and before that as Commercial Consul in Shanghai, China. He has more than 14 years in Government Service, seven of them with the Commercial Service. He has also worked extensively in the private sector directing international marketing at both U.S. and foreign firms.

While in Ft. Lauderdale in his first year of an initial domestic assignment he authored or received credit for 33 high value export successes valued at an impressive \$30 Million (cumulative Florida successes for 2005 totaled \$79 Million by comparison). Amid many challenges that accompanied this year of transition to the domestic side of the CS, Mr. Lawton also managed to conduct 80 out of office visits to clients, more often than not accompanied by a junior specialist for mentoring purposes. This far exceeded expectations, as did his total counseling sessions numbering 286. Moreover, this exceptional performance data excludes his face to face counseling of clients at national events where, as a member of the China Business Information Center team, he conducted extensive speaking engagements and individual counseling at events held in Florida and throughout the country. A major highlight of Bill's first year was his initiative in advocating that the EAP SCO conference be held in Florida. He cultivated a partner to host it and worked daily to enhance its value for his fellow officers and those who would attend. Recruiting the Asia Pacific team and local colleagues, he managed to present thirty two sector and regional panels and stage 121 SCO/client meetings resulting in many new successes.

During his tour as the Principal Commercial Officer at the U.S. Consulate in Vladivostok Russia he became a highly visible advocate of U.S. business interests in a consular district, geographically larger than Europe. He was a control officer for the first two Russia Energy Summits, organized in Houston and Moscow, respectively, and he also chaired several sessions at the Pacific Oil and Construction Materials Conference and the U.S. - Russia Ad Hoc Working Group (Gore - Chernomyrdin) meetings in Alaska. With the active participation and support of both the Anchorage and Houston EACs, he successfully organized a seminar at The Offshore Technology Conference in Houston, the largest offshore oil show in the world. This tutorial was attended by 600 participants who were briefed on how to do business in the booming Sakhalin Oil and Gas market, a high priority focus for U.S. business and government interests. He was able to transform The Vladivostok International Business Association (VIBA) from a moribund organization of two or three NGOs, ignored by the local government and businesses, into a major networking organization representing the international business community in Vladivostok. Today more than 60 businesses as well as two vice-governors regularly attend VIBA meetings. The result of these efforts was a harvest 18 success stories worth over \$5 million. This was a substantive increase over the previous years and a smaller staff thanks to Lawton's improved and innovative utilization and mentoring of non-specialist staff achieved it.

While a Commercial Officer at the U.S. Consulate in Shanghai, China, his chief responsibilities included U.S. trade promotion specifically in the marine, medical and high technology sectors, and in government procurement. During his first year he developed and launched the Marine Technologies Sectoral Initiative. The following year he was able to build on the previous year's foundation, and in close association with NOAA and the National Marine Manufacturers Association, and working with several USEACs, he developed several innovative IBPs and recruited Chinese officials from 40 Yangtze River ports for travel to the Mississippi River Delta to purchase port technologies. He also put together several Platinum Key marketing trips for several U.S. companies to ports and shipyards throughout China. His work in the marine sector generated major export successes. The total dollar value in marine successes for one year alone was \$53.3 million, more than triple the dollar value of the previous year of \$18 million (for his section alone). This showed a dramatic increase in the sales of goods in a sector long considered moribund for U.S. products. It is now being used as a template for promotion of the Marine Sector at other posts.

In the private sector he so successfully ran the U.S. subsidiary of a French offshore technology company that he was hired by their major U.S. competitor and worked there as the Director of International Marketing. Taking designs for systems formerly developed and used by the U.S. Navy, he was successfully able to introduce these technologies into the commercial offshore market and break a long held European monopoly in this sector. Before this he worked in the tourism industry for cruise ship lines such as Holland America-Westours and Princess Cruises eventually ending up as the Planning Manager for Society Expeditions. He has worked in many countries in Africa and Asia before joining the Foreign Commercial Service.

Bill was born in Kansas City, Missouri, the son of an Army Officer. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Biology from the University of San Francisco, and an MBA from the American Graduate School of International Management (Thunderbird) in Phoenix, Arizona, where he was recognized for advanced work on the European Union. He is married, has worked as a professional diver and is an avid SCUBA diver. He has been an instructor in this sport for over fifteen years. His wife is Russian, from Moscow and an extensively published commercial photographer.

Bill served in the U.S. Navy with the Riverine Patrol Force in Vietnam and then aboard the Polaris Submarine U.S.S. George Washington Carver (SSBN 656) out of Holy Loch, Scotland.

